III. Guiding Principles for Information Technology

These guiding principles provide the policy framework to promote a standard and cost effective approach to delivering and operating information technology to achieve the goals of improving:

- Efficiency
- Public access to our government
- Customer service
- Transparency of and accountability for decisions

1	**Central Review and Coordination of Information Technology**	♦ Information technology investments should be coordinated at a Countywide level to leverage development efforts, reduce duplicative costs and ensure compatibility of systems.
2	**Information Technology Enables Effective and Efficient Service Delivery**	♦ Funding approval through the technology governance structure should be based on a sound business case that documents measurable outcomes, including service delivery improvements. ♦ When assessing new software solutions, commercial off-the-shelf software packages that adequately meet the business requirements of the County are preferable to custom developed applications. The County should determine requirements and analyze both operational and financial business cases when evaluating the alternatives of building or buying new software applications. ♦ Information technology investments should be effectively managed and tied directly to service performance results. ♦ Investments in legacy systems should be limited to mandated and essential changes that can demonstrate extending the useful life of the system.
3	**Information Technology Standards**	♦ Hardware, software, and methodologies for management and development should adhere to Countywide standards adopted through the technology governance structure. ♦ Hardware and software should adhere to open (vendor independent) standards to promote flexibility, inter-operability, cost effectiveness, and mitigate the risk of dependence on individual vendors, where applicable. The County will proactively define and describe these standards in RFPs and other communications with vendors. ♦ Technology operations and project management should adhere to best practices to ensure consistency, achieve efficiencies, and maximize success. ♦ Technical staff should be provided with appropriate training to ensure effective management of information technology resources.

4	**Access to Information and Services**	◆ Information and services should be provided using web-based technology with standard navigation tools and interfaces where appropriate.
		◆ A reliable and secure communication and computer infrastructure should be provided to ensure seamless self-service access to information and services.
5	**Business Process Improvement**	◆ Industry best practices should be applied to optimize business processes.
		◆ When implementing commercial off-the-shelf software packages, the County should adopt and implement industry best practices, redesigning business processes as required in order to improve operations, minimize customization and speed the delivery of new business applications
		◆ Comprehensive business solutions should be developed across organizational boundaries to cover end-to-end business processes.
		◆ Data should be captured once and shared to reduce cost, duplication of effort and potential for error.
6	**Privacy and Security**	◆ The County should adopt and implement an effective privacy policy that articulates the manner in which it collects, uses, and protects data, and the choices offered to protect personal information within the constraints of public disclosure law.
		◆ Reasonable, cost-effective measures should be implemented to protect data, hardware and software from inappropriate or unauthorized use, alteration, loss or destruction.
		◆ Auditable security measures should be part of the initial architecture and design as information technology solutions are developed and implemented.